

NEWS RELEASE

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a division of the
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

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The Missouri State Water Patrol, like most emergency services, will operate during the coming season with fewer officers due in part to National Guard activations.

The Water Patrol has lost fourteen of its officers to National Guard duty and higher than normal attrition. Due to this significant loss of manpower, the Water Patrol will patrol the state with fewer officers this summer. The reduction of manpower could cause an increase in response time to calls for service, such as minor accidents, complaint calls, and calls to assist boaters in distress.

The Water Patrol anticipates this shortage may have the greatest impact on the larger lakes and rivers. The Lake of the Ozarks, for example, will be operating with 15 rather than the 18 officers that patrolled the lake last year. The Alton Pool on the Mississippi River will have two fewer officers than are normally assigned there.

The Water Patrol has anticipated the manpower shortage and will make every effort to minimize adverse effects through manpower reallocation and increased overtime during peak periods. On Lake of the Ozarks, for example, the number of Water Patrol interns is being increased from two to six. Increasing the number of interns will free up officers to handle the most serious calls more quickly.

Colonel Jerry Adams has stressed that water safety issues will continue to be the Water Patrol's primary concern. Officers will be assigned to areas requiring the most law enforcement attention and will be working overtime to help ensure the public will enjoy another safe boating season.

Watch the Missouri State Water Patrol homepage at www.mswp.state.mo.us for updates on Boating Safety Courses in your area.

MISSOURI STATE WATER PATROL
Telephone (573) 751-3333
Home Page <http://www.mswp.state.mo.us>